

**Practice: 324 - Deep Tillage****Scenario: #1 - Deep Tillage less than 36 inches****Scenario Description:**

Fields (80 acres) with adverse soils conditions that restrict plant growth such as compacted layers caused by tillage operations or restrictive layers such as hardpans (duripans) in the root zone. This practice does not apply to normal tillage practices to prepare a seedbed but is meant to fracture the compacted zone below the restrictive soil layer.

**Before Situation:**

In this geographic area, crop plants are observed as having reduced yield, water is not infiltrating into the soil. Soil layers have been compacted by shallow tillage operations, or soils have a hardpan (duripan) layer that is restricting root growth. Typical field size is 80 acres with crop rotations consisting of annual row crops or small grains with conventional tillage or when the harvesting of row crops (onions, sugar beets, potato, corn silage) use heavy trucks to assist with the harvest. Compaction has been caused when soil moisture is too wet for normal field operations or by excessive shallow tillage or field harvest haul traffic throughout the entire field. Soil structure has been reduced, aggregate strength is weak and soil biological activity is low. Soil organic matter is not adequate and the water holding capacity of the soil is limited for the desired root zone.

**After Situation:**

Soil compaction is measured with a penetrometer and/or visual observation of limiting root growth. Deep tillage operations such as subsoiling, paratilling or ripping are performed not as a part of the normal tillage operation for seedbed preparation, but used to relieve compaction at depths less than 36 inches. Soil moisture is less than 30 percent when deep tillage is used. The fractured zone will be sufficient to permit root penetration below the restrictive soil layer. Penetrometers are used to identify the severity (psi) of the compaction and the depth of the restrictive layer. Deep tillage is generally performed in the fall after crop harvest when soil conditions are dry. When possible, harvest operations should be avoided when soil moisture is greater than 50% of field capacity. Field harvest haul traffic should be limited to end rows or haul roads. Using dual tires or tracks beneath tractors or grain wagons can help spread the weight load.

**Scenario Feature Measure:** Area Tilled

**Scenario Unit:** Acre

**Scenario Typical Size:** 80

**Scenario Cost:** \$1,284.00

**Scenario Cost/Unit:** \$16.05

**Cost Details (by category):**

| Component Name                           | ID   | Component Description  | Unit | Price (\$/unit) | Quantity | Cost       |
|--|------|--|------|-----------------|----------|------------|
| <b>Equipment/Installation</b>            |      |  |      |                 |          |            |
| Ripper or subsoiler, 16 to 36 inch depth | 1235 | Deep ripper or subsoiler, (16-36 inches depth) includes tillage implement, power unit and labor. | Acre | \$16.05         | 80       | \$1,284.00 |